

Information Contained in Commercial Item Descriptions (CIDs)

This document provides the order of the various sections of a Commercial Item Description (CID), and explains the general purpose and contents of each section. Click on the links below to jump to a section.

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Scope

The scope is a concise statement describing the intended use of the CID.

Purchaser Notes

This section lists the items that the purchaser must (shall) specify and may specify.

Typical items that must be specified by the purchaser are:

- The options desired (types, styles, low sodium, etc.)
- If the analytical requirements stated in the CID are sufficient
- If the analytical requirements are to be verified through product testing
- If the product quality and safety are to be certified by the supplier or by USDA

Typical items that may be specified by the purchaser are:

- A quality assurance inspection at the manufacturing plant of the purchased product
- Whether this quality assurance inspection is a plan systems audit or a plant survey
- Special packaging requirements
- If quality requirements will be defined through a bid sample

Classification

Foods are classified into categories based on their different types, styles, varieties, flavors, sizes, etc. The purchaser must specify the categories of the product they would like to procure. Not all CIDs contain the classification section, it depends on the product.

Manufacturer's/Distributor's Notes

This section is targeted for the supplier of the food item. It lists the requirements that must be met if they are to manufacture the product for the purchaser.

Processing Guidelines

This section contains guidelines, regulations, and specific requirements (such as age requirements, shelf life, temperature requirements, etc.) that pertain to the manufacturing of the product. Guidelines are not a requirement, however regulations and requirements must be followed during production.

Salient Characteristics

This section describes the physical and functional properties of the product that must be met. It includes information on the requirements for flavor, odor, texture, appearance, ingredients, defects/foreign material and any other salient characteristics that are important for the specific product.

Analytical Requirements

This section states analytical and microbiological requirements that are important in determining the final quality and safety of the food product to be purchased. The purchaser must specify if the food product to be purchased shall comply with the requirements stated or if the requirements are to be different. The purchaser must also state if analytical testing made in accordance with the stated methods shall be required to verify if the food product meets the analytical requirements. The test methods specified in this section are the methods that USDA will use to evaluate the analytical requirements when the analytical testing is specified. Vendors can use any method they want.

Manufacturer's/Distributor's Product Assurance

This section states that the manufacturer of the purchased product must meet the salient characteristics of the CID and meet the manufacturer's own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices. The purchaser has the right to require the manufacturer to provide proof of this conformance.

Regulatory Requirements

This section states that the delivered product to be purchased must meet all applicable Federal, State, and local mandatory requirements and regulations. Also, the product must comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

Quality Assurance Provisions

The purchaser must choose if the supplier will certify that the purchased product meets or exceeds the requirements of the CID or if the USDA will be the certifying program. The USDA will select random samples of the packaged product and evaluate the conformance of the product based on the requirements of the CID. Also, the purchaser has the option to require the manufacturer undertake a quality assurance inspection and provide evidence of this by

certificate. The purchaser can choose one of three quality assurance inspections; food defense system survey, the plant systems audit or the plant survey.

Packaging

All aspects of packaging must be commercial, unless otherwise specified by the purchaser.

USDA Inspection Notes

This section lists the requirements that are to be evaluated for compliance if the purchaser selects the USDA to certify the purchased product.

Reference Notes

This section lists USDA certification contacts, USDA analytical laboratory contacts, as well as sources of documents referenced in the CID. All government activities involved with preparing, coordinating, and reviewing the CID are listed at the end of the document using the following abbreviations.

Army GL	- U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center
Navy SA	- Bureau of Supplies for Navy
Air Force 35	- Air Force Services Agency
Army MD	- Office of the Surgeon General
Army QM	- U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School
Navy MC	- United States Marine Core
DLA	- Defense Logistics Agency
DLA SS	- DLA Troop Support – Subsistence Items of Supply
DOJ	- Department of Justice
BOP	- Federal Prison System, Administrator of Food Services
HHS	- Health and Human Services
NIH	- National Institutes of Health
FDA	- Food and Drug Administration
USDA	- United States Department of Agriculture
FV	- Fruit and Vegetable Program
VA	- Department of Veteran's Affairs
VA OSS	- VA Office of Acquisition and Material Management Division